

Half-time

By Hatters for Hatters



ORANGE

Season 09-10 No2

Under-performing Edition

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hatters matters

... a word from the editor

SHOULD he stay or should he go?

That's the question many angry Town fans have been asking in the wake of a series of disappointing performances.

At the time of writing (the day after the woeful Wrexham game), Mick's still in a job, but things will surely need to pick up very quickly if he's to continue to lead the battle to get us back into the Football League.

Worryingly, after the Wrexham match the gaffer said the players didn't initiate any post mortem in the dressing room following the 3-0 debacle and it was left to him to start asking some hard-hitting questions.

OK, we're a game behind everyone after the ridiculous police



Watching Luton Town at the moment is as much fun as pulling teeth as Big Mick admitted following the 'abysmal' performance against Wrexham

decision to call off the York game, so perhaps we're in a slightly false position in the early league table.

But in reality, we're off the pace already and how many games have we actually played well in?

Sadly the answer is not many and, while this was glossed over while the points were

still coming, it's a different matter now.

Mick will always be a Luton playing legend but this is his team and, much as it pains us to say it, the excuses are starting to run out.

Nothing would make us happier than to see him turn things around, but it needs to start tonight against our local rivals.



Life at Luton Town is never dull. So why not send us your views on the Hatters by emailing orange@bedsnews.com

The best messages will be featured in this fanzine or the letters pages of the Luton News/Dunstable Gazette

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The news at

Captain Nico in a cover up

WE never thought we'd see the day, but some Town fans have begun to turn on captain Nico.

He may deservedly rank as a Hatters legend, but he hasn't got into gear this season after missing seven games already through suspension.

The bad tackle at Oxford, which led to his red card, was so late it was in the next match.

Here at Orange, though, we're confident that the skipper will come good as everyone knows he's got Luton Town pumping through his veins.

But surely after that Oxford misdemeanour, which wasn't exactly a captain's example, he's not too embarrassed to say he's our leader, as this picture, where he's covering up the armband, would suggest.



FOLLOW THE LEADER... But Nico's hiding his armband

Great expectations from fans

UNDERSTANDABLY, as we've a team of players who should be good enough to play at a much higher level, there's been a bit of unrest on the terraces as Town struggle to give their opponents a damn good thrashing each week.

There's been booing on several occasions which has given some of the squad the right hump.

You might think the players pictured here are celebrating the opening goal against



Crawley. In fact, the snap was taken moments before George Pilkington broke the deadlock on 36 minutes.

After enduring an annoying half hour of frustration, supporters

were getting restless. Picking up on the negative vibes, some of the boys started heading off the pitch in protest - that was until they saw Mick's face scowling at them from the dugout.

Ken

Rumours, speculation, gossip and half-truths

Just a minute will do

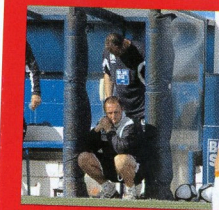
THE mighty Gateshead gave the Hatters a real scare when they came to Kenilworth Road earlier this season.

After falling behind, Town recovered with two goals in 60 seconds to get their noses in front.

But the general consensus after the match was that Luton were fortunate to gain the three points.

Backing this up is Kevin Gallen who is pictured on the left admitting to the crowd the actual number of minutes that Town turned up for.

On this occasion the disappointed (and disappoing!) away crowd, pictured below, really could have 'come in a taxi'. Go on, count 'em, there's 48!



Hatters remain confident that they're going to make a speedy return to the Football League. So much so that they're already trying to plan ahead for new regulations which have been introduced at the higher level this season. The ridiculous seven sub allowance will mean space will be at a premium in the dugout. It looks like it's going to be a real crush judging by this trial run.

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2pts



mark wood

Town 2 Boro' 1
Has turned out to be a real six-pointer, a game we must win to stay in touch.

Town 2 T'worth 0
Maybe one of the surprises this season but Tamworth can't live with Luton.

K'ster 1 Town 2
Tough, tough afternoon and the Hatters have to come back from behind.

Alt'ham 0 Town 1
Played here last season and have to be at our best to win without going to pens.

It's 1pt for a right result and 2pts for a precise score
our survey says...

5pts



steve sims

Town 1 Boro' 0
A local derby, big crowd, low on quality, but high on drama as late pen seals victory.

Town 4 T'worth 0
Hatters find their form in front of goal and give the visitors a right spanking.

K'ster 0 Town 1
Strong defence keep Harriers at bay after Town hang on to a sole Hall strike.

Alt'ham 0 Town 2
They'll be after revenge after last year's cup exit, but Town's extra quality wins out.

3pts



alec swann

Town 0 Boro' 0
Two promotion-chasing sides cancel each other out in a drab 0-0 draw

Town 1 T'worth 0
Just the one goal today as the Hatters do enough to see off the visitors.

K'ster 0 Town 2
A welcome away win for Mick's men as Gallen finds the target at the Harriers.

Alt'ham 1 Town 1
It was a draw last year and it's a draw this year as Craddock nets to claim a point.

3pts



steve nolan

Town 1 Boro' 0
The Hatters scrape past fellow promotion chasers thanks to a late goal.

Town 3 T'worth 1
A Craddock brace in a comfortable Hatters home win.

K'ster 1 Town 1
Another away-day draw as the Hatters falter on the road yet again.

Alt'ham 1 Town 2
A decent away win for Harford's men thanks to two first-half goals.

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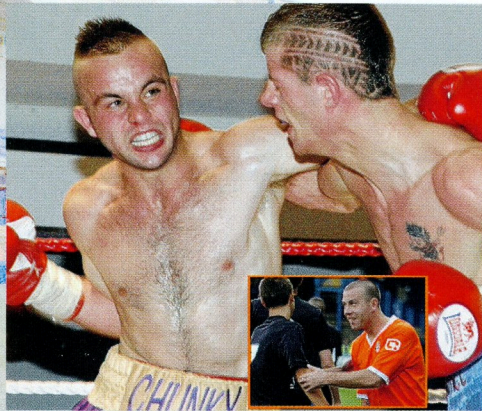
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Lookie likies...



WE'RE all hoping that the Hatters will be packing quite a punch this season – but it looks like Keith Keane has taken it more literally than most of his team-mates!

Blue Square Premier is obviously going to be more rough and ready than we're used to and the tackles will be flying in, but Keano seems to have taken it to heart and started developing his pugilistic skills.

OK – maybe not...

The lookie likey in question is actually Luton boxer, Michael 'Chunky' Devine.

Chunky was involved in a thrilling fight against Michael Harvey at Luton's

Liquid Nightclub over the summer, climbing back off the deck to stop Harvey with some killer combinations.

The bill also featured a thrilling first-time victory for devoted Hatters fan Blaine Courtney (videos of their fights are at www.lutontoday.co.uk).

And just like Chunky, we are all hoping that Keano can help the Town lift themselves off of the non-league canvas and mount a serious promotion push this season.

And if the worst comes to the worst, we'll just replace Keano with Chunky and sock it to the opposition in a different way...

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target



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the keeper

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You!!

SO for all our possession, all our territorial advantage and all our dominance we're struggling to find the net.

This really shouldn't be the case considering the wealth of attacking talent at manager Mick Harford's disposal.

Yet (at the time of writer) centre-half George Pilkington is still joint top of our top scorers charts.

Two doubles have seen him hit the heady heights of four for the season and also seen him pick up the Blue Square Premier Player Of The Month award

for August... all sure signs the classy defender is on his game.

We've come to expect his surety at the back, but his rich vein of goalscoring form has come as a welcome surprise – especially to us here at Half-Time Orange.

In fact, we think many of our shot-shy Hatters could learn a thing or two from him.

All too often this term they look they've been trying to walk the ball into the back of the net when all they have really needed to do is let fly – number one in Pilks' top tips!

Plenty of Town's top stars have a decent whack on them so it's a bit of a mystery why more of them aren't using it on more occasions.

And not being the shy retiring type, Pilks isn't afraid of wellying the ball hard. Put him in the box and he's more than happy to hit the damn thing as hard as he can – and woe betide anyone getting in the way.

Number two on Pilks' list – hit the ball hard. Now this is all well and good, but you're not going to win the game unless you get your efforts on target.

You can have all the shots in the world, but you won't burst the net if you don't hit the target – that's number three on Pilks' chart.

And there's no point putting it down the keeper's throat either.

A powder-puff effort down the centre of the goal's not going to do you any good.

Work the keeper, put it in the corner, don't let the opposition off easy.

That's it – Pilks' four-point guide.

Now celebrations are a completely different story. Even Pilks needs to do some work there...



IN the programme for the Chester game, Mick Harford told us: "When I'm in kitchen I make a superb Shepherd's Pie."

Unfortunately, what we're seeing on the pitch at the moment reflects Mick's cooking style – the results have been solid and sustaining, but the performances mundane, unimaginative and not special enough to win any prizes.

The ingredients for success seem to be there, but is it the right mix? Keano, when played in the middle, has proved he can boss games. Yet too often he is being wasted at right-back, where he is liable to get skinned.

Tom Craddock is stuck out on the wing and playing with his head down, when we need him in the box, feeding off two wingers and



**Solid yet unspectacular:
A standard Shepherd's Pie**

peppering the goal with shots.

I don't think that Luton fans are naive enough to believe that we should make mincemeat of every single team we come up against.

But we gave Kettering that draw on a plate, playing aimless long balls that were meat and drink to Ropes and the brilliantly named

'Mick needs to stop making excuses...'

Exodus Geohaghan.

Do the players lack hunger? Nico certainly showed he has lost none of his bite at Oxford, with the challenge that earned his red card, a tackle Dirty Leeds' Norman Hunter would have been proud of.

OK, so the player may have gone down like a sack of potatoes, but Mick's contention that there was: "No intent in my opinion, he just knocked him off the ball," really takes the biscuit.

Mick needs to stop making excuses – if he can't stand the heat, he needs to get out of the kitchen...

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Michelle



What a beauty!

VITAL STATISTICS

Full Name: Michelle Evans
Age: 28

Occupation: Project co-ordinator for airAlert

Attached? Yes

Been a supporter since: 2000

Best looking Hatter: Shane Blackett

Most valuable player: They're all valuable in their own way!

Player to flog: Couldn't possibly say!

Ideal night out: Dinner at a Mexican restaurant followed by loads of cocktails with my best mate Kelly and maybe one or two bottles of champagne.

Favourite TV shows: The Inbetweeners, Gavin & Stacey, Friends, Sex & The City



If Half-time Orange's Steve Nolan was in charge of the team, this is what he'd do.



AFTER a steady start to the campaign and the Town often looking less likely to score than Elvis taking a trip to the moon, hopefully things can improve this month and the Hatters can hit the back of the net a bit more with Hatch-back to full fitness (apologies for the worst and possibly the most over-used pun of the season already).

Often Luton's saviour so far this season, not to mention the fact that there's very little squad competition for the spot, Tyler is an automatic choice in goal.

With Emanuel still injured, Freddie keeps his spot at left-back, while it'd be good to see Reynolds given a run on the right.

Prolific at the business end of the field and ever-reliable in defence, Pilko is another who is an automatic choice these days and I'd quite like to see him joined in the middle of the

defence by the tenacious Keano.

Even though never-present Nico is back from suspension, I'd like to see Asa Hall joined in the middle by a slightly deeper Gallen who could link up play between the defence and the forwards.

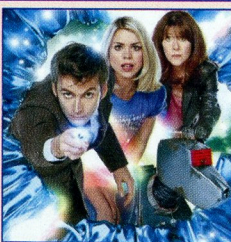
He's picked there, not only for his range of passing, but also to hold the ball up and bring others into play.

Industrious flukey-goal Newton should retain his place on the right, with Jarvis deputising for hamstrung Burgess on the left.

Craddock would take a central role in my team, none of this being shoved out on the left - what's all that about?? - and joined by Hatch up front.

Hopefully shot-shy Town can stop trying to walk the ball into the net and test the opposition keeper with a few more efforts on goal. Another three points at home today with any luck.

Steve's line-up for today



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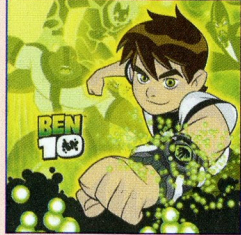
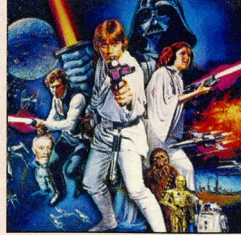
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From The Kenny End...

HIYA, and welcome to my latest From The Kenny End column.

As I write this, I'm currently very sore as I've been training for what is being billed as the: 'First Time, Last Time, Only Time'.

Yes, I will be stepping into the ring for a professional wrestling match in the near future.

Even though I have been in the sport in varying capacities for the past 10 years, I've never chosen to be an active competitor.

Despite that, I'm actually less nervous about this than I have been about many Luton games over the

years – so figure that one out!

As for the Hatters, at the time of writing we're now six games unbeaten.

I have to be honest and say that I've only seen one game where we've truly justified that status (the home game against Mansfield), but we're fighting a lot of injuries at the moment and things can, and will, come together and get better.

I hate to hear the fans booing our boys, and whilst I appreciate supporters have the right to complain when things aren't going our way, I really do

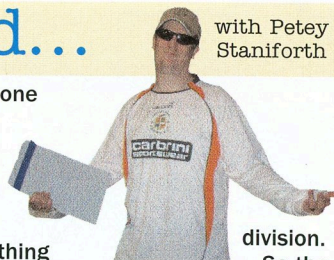
encourage everyone reading this to get behind the team no matter what.

The best and most important thing we can do right now is stick together.

And the way I see it? The ability to draw or even win a game, when you're not at your best, is the form of champions.

Because when we hit form, we're going to be untouchable.

Whilst one of football's favourite cliches is that it's not played on paper, on that proverbial piece of paper we have the best side in the



with Petey Staniforth

division. So the

moment we click into gear and start living up to that, which is sure to happen, the Blue Square Premier just won't know what hit it.

So make sure you get behind the boys at the games, make as much noise as possible, and most of all let's do it the right way – the only way – the Hatters way!

Petey



O'Cahan you believe it?

Hatters fan John O'Cahan gives his verdict on the latest Kenilworth Road news

OH dear. It would appear all is not going to plan.

And while I have been a fervent supporter of Mick and his team for a lot longer than many of you, I am now convinced that he is simply not the man for the job.

I am sure that I'm in a similar situation to a lot of you in that I find it almost impossible to criticise the man in light of his previous service at this club, but the facts are thus: we have to win promotion this season, with Mick or without him. I love Mick Harford, and I always will.

We all will, but how many Luton supporters remember him as the dazzling centre-forward in

their dreams; how many Birmingham, Lincoln and Wimbledon supporters also look back to Mick's glory days with a nostalgic smile?

Oddly enough, although Mick was hardly afraid to let defenders know where he was back in the day, he seems too naive and nervous to impose his will on matches.

His tactics seem forced and stagnant, and we can thank our lucky stars for Mark Tyler between the sticks.

Mick has managed to sign an abundance of skilful players, but has not assembled a coherent and exciting team, and I think that hints to his ideal role at the club.



TIME TO GO MICK?

I can't help but think back to the days under Joe Kinnear and Harford, almost a decade ago now. Is it too late to create another managerial duo in a similar manner?

But no player, coach or

manager will ever be bigger than the club, and if Luton Town require a different manager to recover from this horrible decline, then so be it.

On another subject, I'd like to take this opportunity to congratulate Diverse FM on their coverage of Luton Town so far this season. It has been thoroughly, er, "entertaining" to say the least.

I particularly like that young man (Steve, I think his name is) who reads out the results and comments on the matches at half and full time. Can we get him as the PA announcer at Kenilworth Road? Come on you Hatters.

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Roger Wash tracks down those Luton-born footballers who have excelled.....

Boy done good



FEARLESS: Keith Barber

Keith Barber

KEITH Barber needed to move away and play local league football in London before being spotted by his hometown club and signing professional forms for Alec Stock in April 1971.

A brave and fearless keeper with no little skill, Barber made his Hatters debut as the 1970-71 season was drawing to a close and, although he had to share duties with Tony Read in the following campaign, he made the position his own in 1972-73.

Barber was challenged by Graham Horn as the Hatters won promotion to the old Division One in 1974, but secured a regular place and starred as the team narrowly failed to avoid the drop back to Division Two following a fighting finish to the season.

Ever-present in 1975-76, Barber suffered a bad injury at Notts County early in the following campaign and by the time he was fit again his place in the team had been taken by the consistent Milija Aleksic.

Rather than sit in the reserves, Barber accepted a move to Swansea but

eventually fell out with manager John Toshack as: "I was not from Liverpool."

A loan spell at Cardiff followed, but Barber wisely decided to hang up his gloves after, ironically, a 7-1 defeat at Luton.

Barber has been a resident of Newmarket since 1983, firstly running a couple of pubs before taking a job with Racetech who look after the starting stalls at racecourses all over the country.

Although not playing competitively for over 30 years, Barber still walks as if he is patrolling his penalty area!

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from the allotments

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WE all live for those big games.

The cup clash with Liverpool or Man U. Or let's face it, even Fulham these days is a big game for either of us. Or Wigan.

And then there are those fixtures that just don't quite have the same effect.

The ones you need to knuckle down and prepare to sit through games against teams you can't really be bothered to watch.

On September 12 those fixtures came round for both of us. Barnsley for the Glory Horns. Barrow for you. Oh what joy.

At least we both actually managed to win, although our respective 1-0 crushings are unlikely to take centre stage in the end of season DVDs.

We're over a month in now so down to reality.

We've sold all our best players (yes, we



BIG GAME: Lions

did have some), mainly to Portsmouth although that clearly hasn't done them any good.

So now we've got our own kids, and an Arsenal kid and a Man U kid who have so much skill it's frightening, mainly for our other players.

Step-overs, twists, turns, back heels - maybe if we give them 90 minutes in the Sunday League fifth division we can knock that rubbish out of them. Keep the ball in the air lads.

And as for you... Well, I thought you'd walk it. But that's unlikely with giants like Oxford, Wrexham, and.. erm... Salisbury to overcome.

The long hard slog begins...
Yellow Army.

If you have a message for Don, our contact details are on page 3

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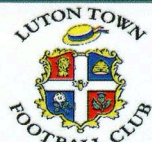
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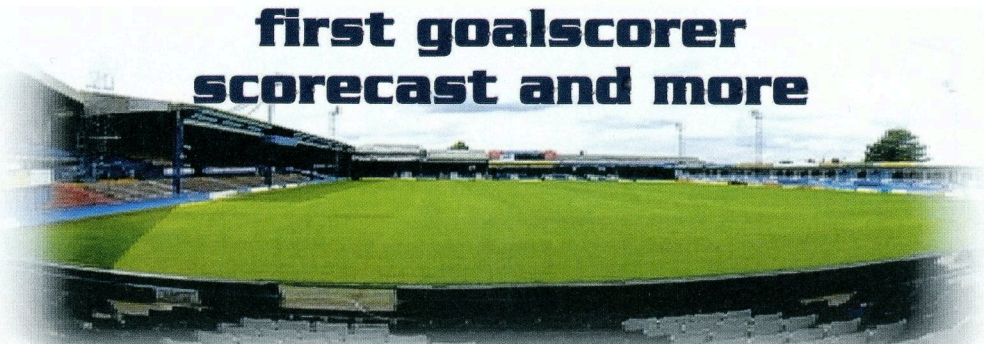
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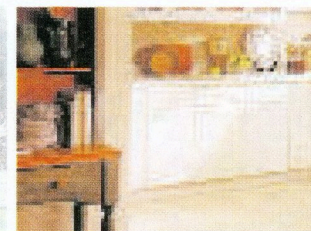
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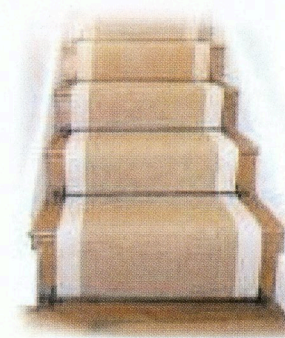
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